

Preparing for Higher Education

Chapter 1

Decisions . . . Decisions . . . Decisions

Choices . . . Choices . . . Choices

Prepare . . . Prepare . . . Prepare!

Testing . . . Testing . . . 1, 2, 3

Certificate, Diploma, or Degree

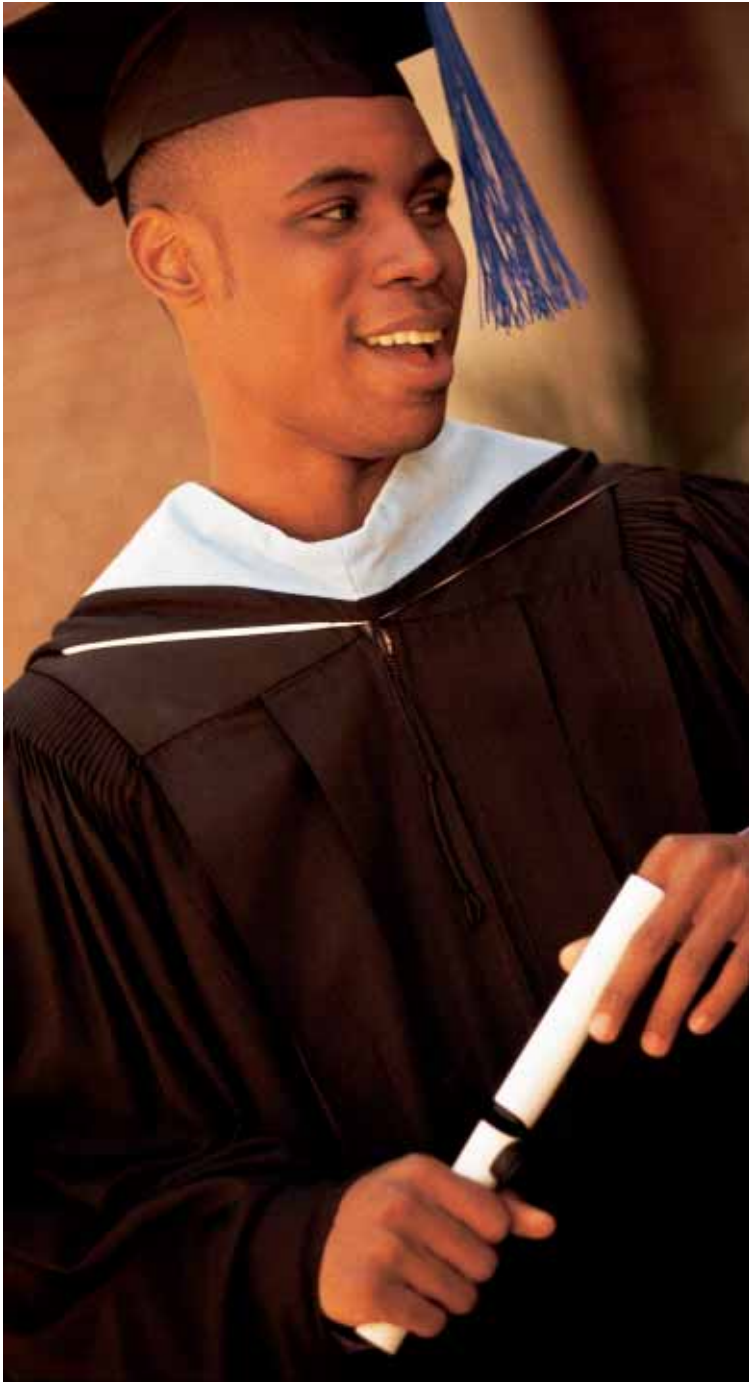
Schools . . . Schools . . . Schools

Admissions . . . Transfers . . . Online Learning

Majors . . . Careers . . . Jobs

School Evaluation





What
happens
next?

Is college
the
answer?

How do I
pay for it?

Help is on the way!

Decisions . . . Decisions . . . Decisions



Did you ever think you'd have so many decisions to make?

Should I go to college? If so, where?

Maybe I should try technical school.

Is going straight into the workforce the answer?

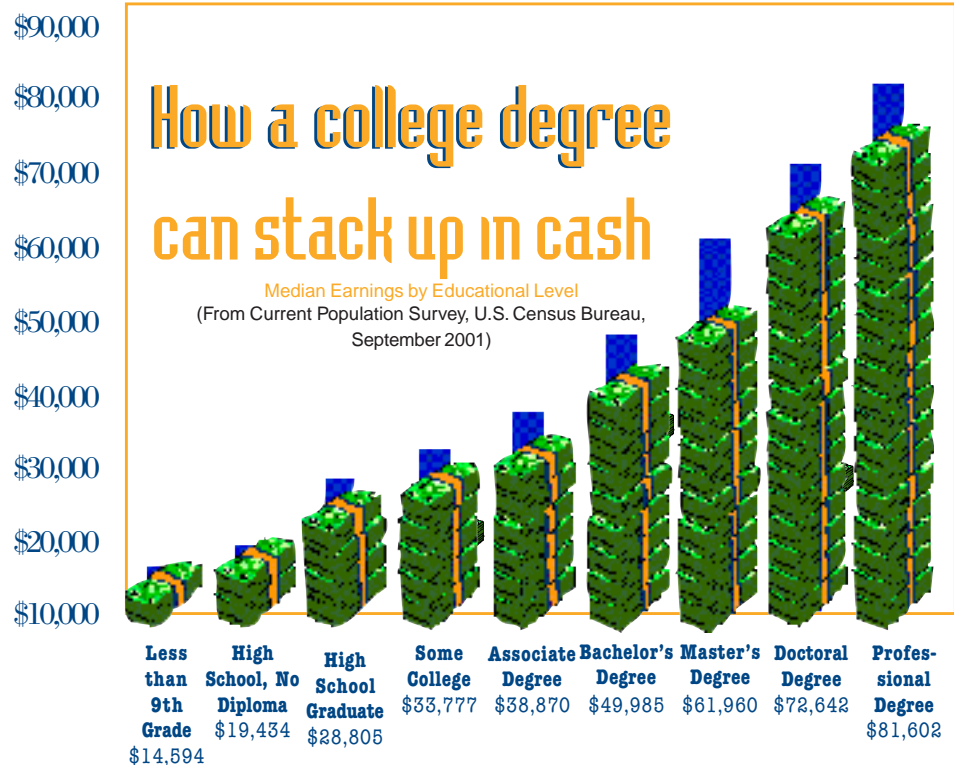
Everyone says that getting a higher education will improve my future.

Tell me how.

This graph gives the 2000 median earnings of people over age 25 who work year-round at a full-time job, based on their level of education. A median is a middle value, so the number of people earning less than the median is equal to the number of people earning more than the median.



So what do all these facts and figures mean? Simply put . . . more education usually means more money! Specifically, this is how it breaks down:



Someone with an associate degree earns 35 percent more than someone with only a high school diploma.

Someone with a bachelor's degree earns 74 percent more than someone with only a high school diploma.

Someone with a master's degree earns 115 percent more than someone with only a high school diploma.

Someone who earns a bachelor's degree will make an average of \$21,180 more each year than someone with just a high school diploma. When you multiply that over a 30-year working lifetime, an additional \$635,400 in income is the result! Impressive, right?

Choices . . . Choices . . . Choices

Choosing the right college or technical school is one of the biggest decisions you'll ever make. You have to ask yourself, "Which school will best help me reach my goals?" and "How will I pay for it?" This book is designed to help you answer these questions. You'll invest a lot of time and money in your education, so read carefully..... choose wisely.



Do you have a Social Security number? You'll need one. Call the Social Security Administration at 1-800-234-5772 to get one.



So, you think you've found the career that's right for you? Find out as much as you can about it from people who earn their living doing what you want to do. Ask . . . where they went to school . . . what they thought of the program at the school . . . would they recommend their school?

Need help deciding on a career? Ask your high school counselor if the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* is available to help you. The handbook is also available online at www.bls.gov/ocohome.htm.



What if the school I want to attend costs too much? Don't jump to conclusions . . . just because a school is expensive doesn't mean you can't afford it. Find out about available financial aid.

I'm confused. Who do I ask for help? Don't be afraid to ask for help . . . from your parents, your guidance counselor, or librarian . . . to find just the right school for you. We can help too . . . see pages 10-11.

Where do I find information about schools? Just about everything you want to know about Alabama's colleges, universities, technical schools, and trade schools is in Chapter 3. If it's not there . . . check with the school's catalog, which you can obtain from the school. Make a list of schools that fit your needs.



There are so many choices . . . how do I decide on a school?

- Visit the schools you're interested in, preferably while classes are in session.
- Don't forget to get their catalogs.
- Most schools have a Web site . . . log on and search.
- Use *Getting In* . . . we have a school evaluation on page 16 that will help you make your choice.
- Get answers . . . from the schools, from the students, and from alumni.

Do you have questions about your safety? Ask for the campus security report of each school you're evaluating. This report, which the school must provide if you ask, contains data on campus crime statistics and security policies.



What if Alabama doesn't have the program of study in which I'm interested? The Academic Common Market might be your answer. For more information, see page 19.

If you haven't taken any college entrance exams, plan to do so as soon as possible. The ACT Assessment is required or accepted at all public universities and many private colleges in Alabama. SAT I and II are accepted at many public and private colleges and universities in Alabama. The community colleges in Alabama accept the ACT and in some cases the ASSET or the COMPASS. Some private trade schools accept the CPAI and ASSET. For more information about entrance exams, see pages 7-8.

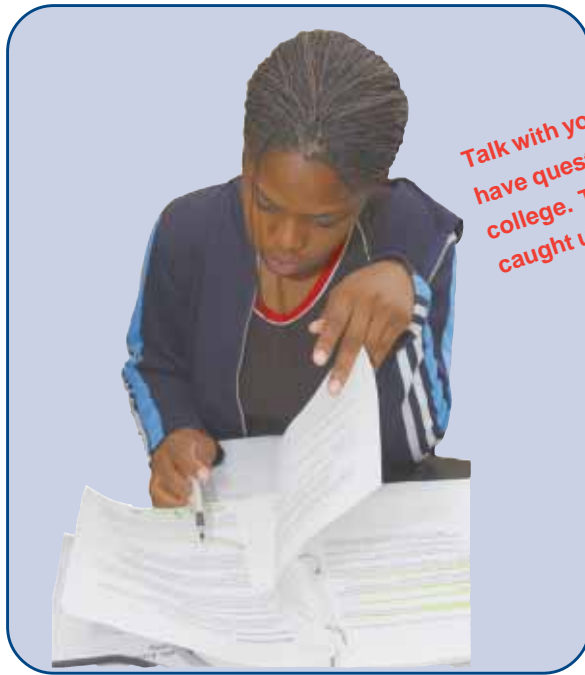
Be prepared . . . make sure you have what you need . . . have you taken the right courses to get into the school you want to attend? Some very general "rules of thumb" are listed here.

- You will need a high school diploma or a General Educational Development (GED) diploma. Most Alabama community colleges and technical schools require either a high school diploma or a GED diploma for admission.
- Check the chart on page 6 for the Advanced Academic Endorsement requirements. Some colleges and universities in Alabama require that you follow this curriculum in high school to qualify for admission at their school.
- Contact the admissions office at the schools you're interested in attending to find out if they require the Advanced Academic Endorsement diploma.
- If you plan to attend an out-of-state school, you should contact the school concerning its requirements for admission.

I'm still in high school . . . should I start applying to colleges and for financial aid?

YES . . . if you know what school you want to attend, start now. Check with the school you plan to attend to find out the best time to apply for financial aid. Financial aid that depends on the information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) cannot be determined until after the first of the year. (See page 20.)





Talk with your guidance counselor if you have questions about being on track for college. This is your last year ... don't get caught unprepared.

Prepare . . .

Prepare . . .

Prepare!

You must meet the minimum diploma requirements to graduate and the Advanced Academic Endorsement requirements to be admitted by some Alabama public universities.

ALABAMA

High School Graduation Requirements

(Source: Alabama Department of Education)

Subject	Diploma Requirements	Advanced Academic Endorsement
English Language Arts	4 credits: Equivalent of English 9, 10, 11, and 12	4 credits: Equivalent of English 9, 10, 11, and 12
Mathematics	4 credits: Equivalent of Algebra I and geometry, plus two additional math courses	4 credits: Equivalent of Algebra I, geometry, and Algebra II with trigonometry, plus an additional math course
Science	4 credits: Equivalent of biology and a physical science, plus two additional life and/or physical science courses	4 credits: Equivalent of biology and a physical science, plus two additional life and/or physical science courses
Social Studies	4 credits: Equivalent of 1 credit of world history and geography, 1 credit of U.S. History I and geography, 1 credit of U.S. History II and geography, and 1/2 credit each of government and economics	4 credits: Equivalent of 1 credit of world history and geography, 1 credit of U.S. History I and geography, 1 credit of U.S. History II and geography, and 1/2 credit each of government and economics
Physical Education	1 credit	1 credit
Health Education	1/2 credit	1/2 credit
Arts Education	1/2 credit	1/2 credit
Computer Applications	1/2 credit (May be waived if competencies outlined in the computer applications course are demonstrated to qualified staff in the local school system. The designated 1/2 credit will then be added to the electives, making a total of six electives.)	1/2 credit (May be waived if competencies outlined in the computer applications course are demonstrated to qualified staff in the local school system. The designated 1/2 credit will then be added to the electives, making a total of four electives.)
Foreign Language		2 credits (Must be in the same foreign language.)
Electives	5 1/2 credits (Local boards must offer foreign languages, arts education, physical education, wellness education, career/technical education, and driver education as electives.)	3 1/2 credits (Local boards must offer foreign languages, arts education, physical education, wellness education, career/technical education, and driver education as electives.)
Total Units	24 credits	24 credits
Additional Requirements	Pass the required statewide assessment for graduation	Pass the required statewide assessment for graduation. Students shall complete advanced level work in the core curriculum consistent with guidelines established by the State Department of Education and local boards.

Testing . . . Testing . . . 1, 2, 3

Testing . . . the word that puts fear and trembling in the hearts of students. *Do I have to take a test in order to further my education? If I do, should I take the SAT or the ACT? What's the difference between the two tests? How do I prepare?* We'll try to answer some of these questions and anticipate others you may encounter in the near future. Taking the ACT or SAT doesn't have to be a terrifying experience.

Do I have to take a test in order to further my education? Probably. Chapter 3 of this publication contains most of the schools in Alabama and lists which tests, if any, they require. It's always wise to check with the school just to make sure.

What's the difference between the two tests?

The **ACT Assessment** is required or accepted at all public and private colleges, community colleges, and universities in Alabama. It contains multiple-choice questions in four sections—English, math, reading, and science reasoning. The scores range from 1 to 36. For more information, visit www.act.org.

The **SAT** is accepted at most public and private institutions. The SAT I is made up of seven sections: three verbal, three math, and one “equating” section. The equating section does not count toward your final score . . . however, you won't be able to tell which section it is, so treat all sections equally. A score from 200 to 800 is possible on both the verbal and math sections. For more information about the SAT I or to register online, visit www.collegeboard.com/sat/html/students/indx001.html. The SAT II consists of one-hour tests in specific subjects. Check with the school you plan to attend to see if it's required. For more information on this test or to register online, visit www.collegeboard.com/sat/html/students/prep005.html.

The ACT and the SAT are the two tests with which you are probably most familiar. However, there are others.

The **English Language Proficiency Test™ (ELPT™)** is a one-hour test of a student's ability to understand

spoken and written standard American English. For more information about the ELPT, visit www.collegeboard.com/sat/html/students/subj001.html.

The **ACT ASSET Program** is a series of short placement tests to measure strengths and needs in language, reading comprehension, mathematics, and study skills. ASSET is used primarily at community colleges. For more information, visit www.act.org/asset/index.html.

The **ACT Computerized Adaptive Placement Assessment and Support System (COMPASS)** is a series of tests

in mathematics, reading, writing skills, and English as a second language which helps pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in particular areas. COMPASS is generally used at community colleges. For more information, visit www.act.org/compass/index.html.

The **Career Programs Assessment (CPat)** measures basic skills in language, reading, and arithmetic and takes about an hour to

complete. Trade schools primarily use this test. For more information, visit www.act.org/cpat/index.html.

How do I prepare? You're a senior . . . hopefully you've been preparing for this since you started high school. However, there are things you can do to help. You can obtain practice tests for both the ACT and SAT at the Web site addresses listed above. Be familiar with the sections and directions before you show up for the test. Get plenty of rest and eat a good breakfast before you test. Remember your No. 2 pencils!

Is there anything I can do now for college credit?

There are a couple of options available to give you a head start on your college education. The first is the **Advanced Placement (AP)** Examination. You must take an AP course in high school to qualify. You can earn



An interesting fact . . . how you deal with answers you don't know should be handled differently with each test. If you don't know the answer on the ACT . . . GUESS! With the ACT, you get credit for only the answers you get right. If you're taking the SAT, DO NOT GUESS! If you don't know an answer, leave it blank. The SAT subtracts the wrong answers from your correct answers to determine your score.

college credit and/or be eligible for advanced placement if grades are satisfactory. There are 34 courses in 19 disciplines. For more information, visit www.collegeboard.com. The other option is the **College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP®)**, which offers 34 tests for many subjects taken during the first two years of college. These scores can be used to award credit or exemption for undergraduate college courses. For more information, visit www.collegeboard.com/clep.



National Test Dates¹

Entrance/Placement Tests

Test Name	Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration ²	Registration Fee ³
ACT	Saturdays: September 27, 2003 ⁴ October 25, 2003 December 13, 2003 February 7, 2004 ⁵ April 3, 2004 June 12, 2004	August 22, 2003 September 19, 2003 November 7, 2003 January 2, 2004 February 27, 2004 May 7, 2004	September 5, 2003 October 3, 2003 November 20, 2003 January 16, 2004 March 12, 2004 May 21, 2004	\$25 ¹ Late registration fee: Additional \$15
SAT I and SAT II	Saturdays⁶: October 11, 2003 December 6, 2003 May 1, 2004 June 5, 2004	September 9, 2003 October 31, 2003 March 26, 2004 April 30, 2004	September 13, 2003 November 12, 2003 April 7, 2004 May 12, 2004	Check with your guidance counselor
SAT I, SAT II, and ELPT™⁷	November 1, 2003 January 24, 2004	September 26, 2003 December 22, 2003	October 8, 2003 December 31, 2003	
SAT I only	March 27, 2004	February 20, 2004	March 4, 2004	
ASSET	At the school's discretion	Not applicable	Not applicable	Check with admissions office
COMPASS	At the college's discretion	Not applicable	Not applicable	Check with admissions office
CPAt	At the school's discretion	Not applicable	Not applicable	Check with admissions office

Tests for College Credit

Test Name	Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration ²	Registration Fee ³
AP	Monday-Friday⁸: May 3–7, 2004 May 10–14, 2004 Different subject each day, a.m. and p.m.	Check with your guidance counselor prior to April 1, 2003	Check with your guidance counselor	\$80 with \$22 fee reduction for low-income students
CLEP®	Exams may be administered any time during the year depending on the institution's policy and schedule	Contact the local test center about registration and scheduling procedures.	Not applicable	Check with the local test center.

¹ Subject to change.

² Additional fee required.

³ Subject to change. Check ACT's Web site for current fees (www.act.org/aap/regist/actfees.html). See your guidance counselor for information about fee waivers for students from low-income families.

⁴ Available only in Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington.

⁵ Due to the special requirements of legislation in effect in New York, a February 2004 test is not scheduled for that state.

⁶ Sunday administration will occur the day after each Saturday administration.

⁷ The Language Tests with Listening are offered in November and January at some test centers.

⁸ Students wishing to take exams that are scheduled for the same time slot should ask their AP Coordinator to contact AP Services at (609) 771-7300 for information about taking one of the exams on an alternate date.

Certificate . . . Diploma . . . Degree

Certificate

6–12 months
Nondegree programs
usually in a vocational
or technical area



Diploma

9–18 months
Nondegree
programs usually
in a vocational or
technical area.

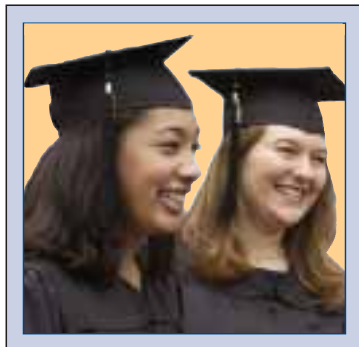


Associate Degree

15 months–2 years
(1) Associate in
Applied Science
(AAS) degrees in
technological and vocational
majors . . . won't usually transfer
toward a four-year degree.



(2) Associate of Arts (AA) or
Associate of Science (AS) degrees
in nonvocational and vocational
areas . . . will usually transfer to
four-year colleges and can be
applied to a bachelor's degree.



If you decide to continue your
education after high school,
you have lots of choices on how
far to go. These range from
certificates to professional
degrees. Choose the one best
suited for you.



Bachelor's Degree

4–5 years
The most common are
the BA, usually awarded
in the humanities and arts,
and the BS, often awarded in
scientific and technical fields.



Doctoral Degree

Bachelor's degree plus
at least 3 more years
Programs usually consist
of course work, independent
research, and dissertation or other
formal presentation for doctoral
degrees in all academic fields



Master's Degree

Bachelor's degree plus at
least 1 year
The Master of Arts (MA) and
Master of Science (MS)
degrees are customarily the
first graduate degrees in all
academic fields.

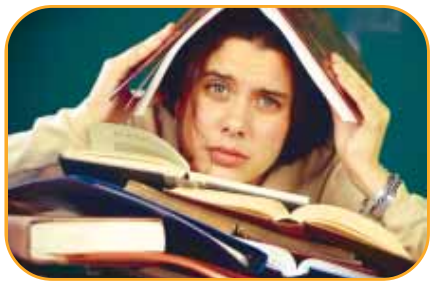


First Professional Degree

At least 6 years (at least
2 years of college for
entrance)
These include degrees in law,
medicine, pharmacy, and theology/
divinity.



Schools . . . Schools . . . Schools



It's decision time! Your choices are almost limitless, but deciding what's best for you can be a difficult task. Ask yourself some questions. Do I want to be close to home or far away? Do I want the greater opportunities of a large university or the more personal, homelike environment of a smaller college? Which kind of school offers the courses I need to get the degree I want? Am I more financially suited to a state university, private college, or a community/technical school? Those are some of the BIG questions, but other things to consider might be the availability of the kinds of athletics and extracurricular activities you like. More than likely, there's a school that will fit you perfectly . . . but it might take some research.

On the next page, you'll find a brief description of the different types of postsecondary schools. Once you get an idea of what kind of school you'd like to attend, then start researching which school fits the criteria you've laid out. Start now . . . don't wait until the end of the school year.

Public Universities



Private Colleges

Community Colleges



Technical Colleges

Trade Schools



Public Universities

If you consider variety a plus, you might want to consider a state university. Your choices of career tracks and courses are greatest at one of these schools. All offer four-year degrees, and some offer associate degrees, advanced degrees, and preprofessional and professional curricula.

If you want a great education for less money and it doesn't bother you if you have some large, impersonal classes, this might be just the thing for you.

Your social opportunities are greater as well. From sororities and fraternities to major sporting events, the choices are limitless.

Private Colleges

If you like a more personal touch with smaller classes and faculty availability, you might consider one of Alabama's private universities and colleges.

These schools may also offer associate and advanced degrees, as well as the four-year degree.

The cost is usually steeper, but don't let that turn you away. Financial aid and work-study are available.

Because there aren't as many people on campus, you might have opportunities to participate in sports, music groups, and other activities.

Junior or Community Colleges

A good place to start your education may be at one of Alabama's many two-year community or junior colleges. After obtaining your associate degree here, you can transfer to a four-year school to obtain your bachelor's degree or you can go right into the workplace.

One of the big advantages of going this route is the availability of the schools. You can probably find one near your home and continue to live at home, saving the cost of room and board.

Technical Colleges

If your interest lies in the technical areas, one of Alabama's many technical colleges might be your choice.

You can obtain a certificate, diploma, or associate degree, taking from 6 to 24 months, depending on your goal.

This is a fast track and leads directly to the job market.

You will only be required to take the courses that relate to your field. And often there will be direct ties to the industries that need your skills.

Trade Schools

Did you say that your interest lies in cosmetology or possibly a fast track to becoming a physical therapist? This might be the route for you.

Trade schools—also called proprietary schools—are privately owned and licensed institutions offering courses in business, trade, technical, industrial, or related areas.

Some of these schools offer only one area of study, while others might offer a variety of courses.

Off-Campus Courses

If you want to veer off the beaten track of actually "going to school," there are

several other options open to you. Online courses offered through the Southern Regional Electronic Campus (SREC) are one possibility. For more information on SREC, see page 14. Alabama Public Television broadcasts college credit telecourses. For more information, call (205) 328-8756. Distance learning courses are offered through correspondence, interactive satellite, and the Internet. Contact the college for information. Some health-related programs are offered completely within a hospital in cooperation with a local college.

If you aren't located near a college or university, some schools provide off-campus sites. These are classes at locations other than the main campus. Contact either your high school counselor or the college admissions office for information.



Admissions . . . Transfers . . . Online Learning



OK, you've made your decision. You've decided to get a higher education and you know which school you want to attend. What next?

Get an application for admission from the school's admissions office or Web site. Mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and Web site addresses are provided in **Chapter 3**. Complete and return the application. Pay attention to deadlines. Deadlines for each school are also provided in **Chapter 3**.

Make arrangements to have your **high school transcript** sent to the school. Get a housing application if you're going to live on campus and submit it as soon as possible. Find out about **deposits, orientations, and registering for classes**. After you've been accepted, notify the school of your decision and let the other schools you've applied to know you won't attend.

If you have questions or don't understand something, ask your parents, guidance counselor, or the admissions director at the school.



You've heard the old saying that the early bird gets the worm. The admissions process has something similar . . . **Early Decision** and **Early Action**.

In **Early Decision**, you make a commitment to enroll in a school if you are admitted. You have to withdraw all other applications and make a nonrefundable deposit by a date well before May 1. One possible disadvantage to Early Decision is that it may mean you don't have any leverage in negotiating a better financial aid package from the school you choose.

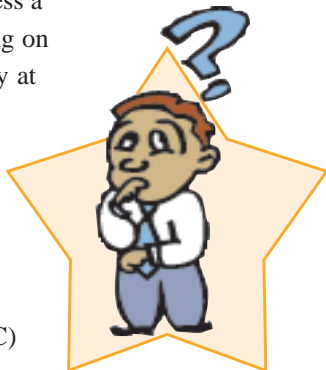
With **Early Action**, you apply to your preferred school and receive a decision before the normal response date. You don't have to enroll at the institution or make a deposit before May 1.

For more information about **Early Decision and Early Action**, including deadline and notification dates, contact the admissions office of the school you are interested in attending; write to the National Association for College Admission Counseling, 1631 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-2818; call (800) 822-6285 or (703) 836-2222; or visit the organization's Web site at www.nacac.com/index.html.

Remember when we discussed testing (**see page 7**)? Now's the time to apply this information. See **Chapter 3** for the school you're planning to attend and see what tests are required and the deadlines for submitting the results. Be sure to confirm this information with the school. If you haven't taken the required tests, check the chart on **page 8** to find out test dates, registration deadlines, and fees . . . and do it NOW! If you've taken the required tests, check with the school to make sure it has your results. It's up to you to make sure you've taken the correct tests and that the results have been reported.



Let's complicate the process a little bit. If you're planning on starting your college study at one Alabama public college, then transferring to another in-state public college, you should learn more about the Alabama Articulation and General Studies Committee (AGSC) and the STARS Computer advising system, a Web-based database at <http://stars.troyst.edu> that provides AGSC transfer information.



AGSC simplifies the transfer of course credit between public schools and has developed a statewide freshman- and sophomore-level general studies curriculum to be taken at all public colleges and universities. The committee has developed *credit hour distribution* requirements rather than *specific course* requirements.

The STARS Computer Advising System and the AGSC transfer information deal with specific majors. The AGSC has approved transfer guides and templates for many majors. Each template is a list of courses for a particular major, such as biology, English, or business, that shows the courses to be taken the first two years. If you follow the template and transfer guide, you are guaranteed that the courses will be applied toward the degree by the



school you transfer to. If you have decided on a major that has a template, you and your advisor can use that template to decide what classes to take before you transfer. A list of the majors for which AGSC has approved templates can be found at

<http://stars.troyst.edu/AGSC/AreaVTmp.htm>. You may also want to consult college catalogs and your school advisor or counselor to learn more about what is required for the major you are planning to pursue.

The credit hours distribution requirements for general studies (Areas I, II, III, and IV) and pre-professional, pre-major, and elective studies (Area V) are shown in the table below.



Alabama AGSC-Approved Credit Hour Distribution Requirements		
Area	General Studies	
I	Written Composition	10 quarter hours or 6 semester hours
II	Humanities and Fine Arts	20 quarter hours or 12 semester hours
III	Natural Sciences and Mathematics	15 quarter hours or 11 semester hours
IV	History and Social and Behavioral Sciences	20 quarter hours or 12 semester hours
	Pre-Professional, Pre-Major, and Electives	
V	Pre-Professional, Pre-Major, and Elective Courses	31 quarter hours or 19–23 semester hours

Keep in mind that completing these courses does not guarantee that you will be accepted at another school or, if you are accepted, that you will be admitted to that major or any particular field of study. In addition, students are encouraged to choose a major early and stay with it. Those who change majors lose course credit in many cases and have to go back to pick up needed requirements.

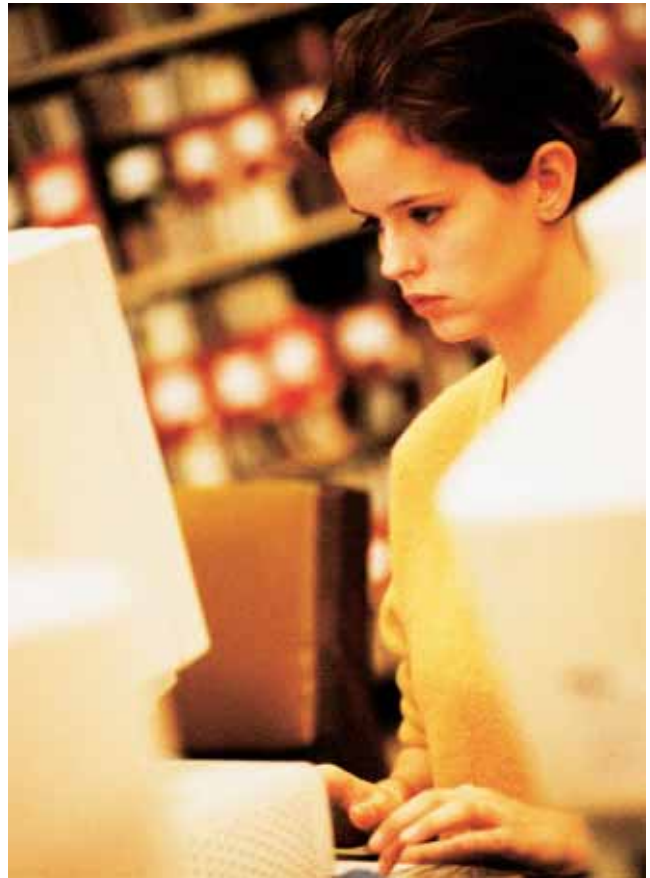
For more information about transfer, visit the STARS Web site <http://stars.troyst.edu> or call (334) 670-3690.

The **Southern Regional Electronic Campus** lets students complete higher education programs at home electronically. The Electronic Campus is offered through the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) and lets students take online classes and earn selected online degrees from schools in other SREB member states. Some participating schools charge out-of-state tuition for nonresidents; others charge a single tuition rate for all students regardless of residence. The certificates and degrees are awarded by the schools that offer them.

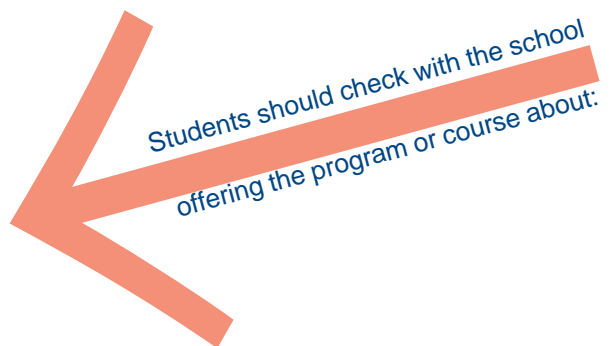
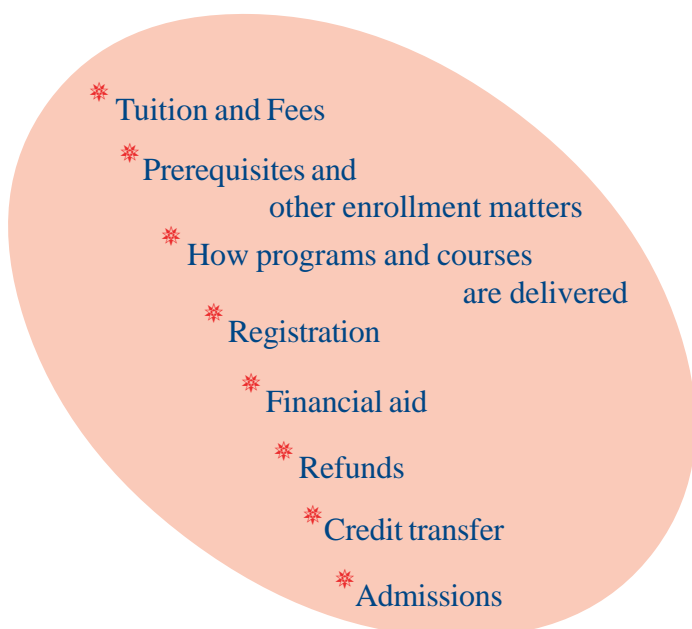
The Electronic Campus also offers courses in other subjects not leading to degrees. All courses are fully accredited, but students need to check with their school and the school from which they are taking courses about the transfer of credit.

The **SREB's Academic Common Market/Electronic Campus Initiative** makes available online degrees from out-of-state schools at in-state tuition rates for programs approved by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education. See page 19 for more information about the Academic Common Market.

GALILEO, an online library, is available through an arrangement with the Georgia Board of Regents to access a database of thousands of periodicals and journals for research information. The library's Web address is neptune3.galib.uga.edu.



For more information about the *Electronic Campus* and an up-to-date list of programs, visit www.electroniccampus.org. For more information about the Southern Regional Education Board, visit www.sreb.org.



Majors . . . Careers . . . Jobs

Some degrees can be very confusing. You might ask yourself . . . *If I get a degree in geography, what exactly do I do with it after college?* How does a degree translate to a career? Here are some practical jobs certain majors might prepare you for.

Accounting

- ☐ Accountant
- ☐ Actuary
- ☐ Financial Aid Director
- ☐ Payroll Manager
- ☐ Systems Analyst
- ☐ Tax Accountant
- ☐ Underwriter

Anthropology

- ☐ Anthropologist
- ☐ Archaeologist
- ☐ Biographer
- ☐ College Professor
- ☐ Forensic Anthropologist
- ☐ Paleontologist
- ☐ Tour Guide
- ☐ Urban Planner

Art and Commercial Art

- ☐ Animator
- ☐ Art Instructor
- ☐ Billboard Artist
- ☐ CD/Record Cover Designer
- ☐ Children's Book Illustrator
- ☐ Comic Strip Artist
- ☐ Greeting Card Artist
- ☐ Photographer

Child and Family Studies

- ☐ Addiction Counselor
- ☐ Camp Director
- ☐ Counseling Therapist
- ☐ Marriage Counselor
- ☐ Social Welfare Worker

Computer Science

- ☐ Artificial Intelligence Specialist
- ☐ Computer Engineer
- ☐ Computer Programmer

- ☐ Database Administrator
- ☐ Microbiologist
- ☐ Technical Writer

Economics

- ☐ Auditor
- ☐ Economist
- ☐ FBI/CIA Agent
- ☐ Hospital/HMO Administrator
- ☐ Personnel Manager
- ☐ Stockbroker
- ☐ Urban Planner

English/Creative Writing

- ☐ Abstract Writer
- ☐ Copy Editor
- ☐ Editor
- ☐ Grant Writer
- ☐ Journalist
- ☐ Press Secretary
- ☐ Proofreader
- ☐ Screen/Television Script Writer

Geography

- ☐ Cartographer
- ☐ Computer Programmer
- ☐ Environmental Impact Analyst
- ☐ Map Curator
- ☐ Park Ranger
- ☐ Travel Agent

Mathematics

- ☐ Air Traffic Control Specialist
- ☐ Cryptographer
- ☐ Engineering Analyst
- ☐ Information Scientist
- ☐ Statistician
- ☐ Treasury Management Specialist

Philosophy

- ☐ Advertising/Copywriter
- ☐ Congressional Staff Member
- ☐ Consumer Advocate
- ☐ Human Resource Manager
- ☐ Peace Corps Worker
- ☐ Public Relations Specialist

Recreation

- ☐ Administration
- ☐ Aerobics Instructor
- ☐ Camp Director
- ☐ Cruise Recreation Director
- ☐ Resort manager
- ☐ Spa Director

Social Work

- ☐ Case Manager
- ☐ Child Welfare Worker
- ☐ Consumer Advocate
- ☐ Drug Rehabilitation Counselor
- ☐ Hospice Coordinator
- ☐ Mental Health Worker
- ☐ Social Service Director

Sociology

- ☐ Clinical Social Worker
- ☐ Counselor
- ☐ Criminologist
- ☐ Gerontologist
- ☐ Occupational Therapist
- ☐ Police Officer
- ☐ Psychotherapist

Speech and Public Communication

- ☐ Career Counselor
- ☐ Fund Raiser

- ☐ Lobbyist
- ☐ Nursing Home Social Worker
- ☐ Psychiatric Social Worker

Theatre/Drama

- ☐ Actor/Actress
- ☐ Campaign Director
- ☐ Costume Designer
- ☐ Director
- ☐ Graphic Designer
- ☐ Lighting Designer
- ☐ Set Designer
- ☐ Stage Manager
- ☐ Theatre Educator
- ☐ Wedding Planner



School Evaluation

			Instructions: If you're considering more than three schools, photocopy this page before proceeding. Select the schools for evaluation and write their names on the slanted lines. Answer the questions for each school. (If the answer is "yes," make a "✓" in the column. If the answer is "no," make an "X" in the column.) What are your findings?
			Does the school offer the educational program you want?
			If you're admitted into the school, are you also admitted into the educational program you want?
			Is the school accredited by an agency accepted by the U.S. Department of Education (e.g., Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Council on Occupational Education, Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology, National Accrediting Commission of Cosmetology Arts and Sciences, American Association of Bible Colleges)?
			Is the school licensed or approved by the appropriate state government agency (e.g., Alabama Commission on Higher Education, Department for Postsecondary Education, Alabama State Department of Education, Alabama Council on Vocational and Technical Education, State Board of Hairdressers and Cosmetologists, State Board of Barbering, Alabama Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors)?
			Is the school approved for federal and state financial aid programs?
			Does the school have the resources to provide you the education you need to be successful in the work force? Look for up-to-date training devices, developmental course work and/or tutorial assistance, general education courses (e.g., English and math), educational qualifications of the faculty, and library holdings and resources related to your field of study.
			Will completion of the educational program qualify you for a job? An exam and/or apprenticeship may also be required. If a licensing examination is required for employment in your career field (e.g., nursing, cosmetology, or law), do a high percentage of the school's graduates pass the exam?
			Does the school have a job placement program? Is it free? Are a high percentage of graduates placed in jobs? Recent graduates and potential employers can help you answer these questions. A good school will give you a list of contacts.
			Does the typical starting salary for a new graduate of the school's educational program compare favorably with that of graduates from the same educational program at other schools? Does it meet with your expectation? If the school provides such data, ask to see detailed statistics substantiating the school's claim.
			Does the enrollment contract (if required) clearly indicate the complete cost of your course of study? Are all necessities (books, room and board, transportation, tools, uniforms, etc.) included in the cost? Schools must make printed cost-of-education information readily available to prospective students upon request.
			Does the enrollment contract contain language to protect you if the school closes or discontinues your program? Call the Better Business Bureau in the area to find out if the school has a problem past.
			Does the school have a printed refund policy? Good schools have a reasonable refund arrangement for students who withdraw from school.
			Does the school have a low withdrawal rate? A high rate may be a warning sign.
			Will credits earned at one school be acceptable for transfer to another? If you plan to enter one postsecondary institution but transfer to another institution later, will your credits transfer?
			Does the school have a low student loan default rate? Call the U.S. Department of Education at (800) 433-3243 to check a school's default rate. A high default rate may be a warning sign.